

**CITY OF ARLINGTON
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
2002 RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS**

INTRODUCTION

A survey of 503 randomly selected Arlington citizens was conducted by Raymond Turco and Associates from January 2 through January 14, 2002. The survey provided citizens the opportunity to rate the quality of the recreational facilities and services in Arlington and to voice their opinions on the recreational needs in the city. The city was divided into five planning sectors with the following number of respondents in each: North (57), West (166), East (121), Southwest (87), and Southeast (72).

VISITATION OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Of all the facilities provided, parks are the most visited by citizens. The percentage of respondents who visited each type of facility during the past year is listed below.

- Park or park facility – 83 percent
- Recreation center – 48 percent
- Athletic field – 47 percent
- Lake Arlington – 24 percent
- Golf course – 23 percent
- Swimming pool – 20 percent
- Bob Duncan Community Center – 17 percent
- Senior recreation center – 13 percent
- Arlington Tennis Center – 10 percent

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH PARKS AND RECREATION

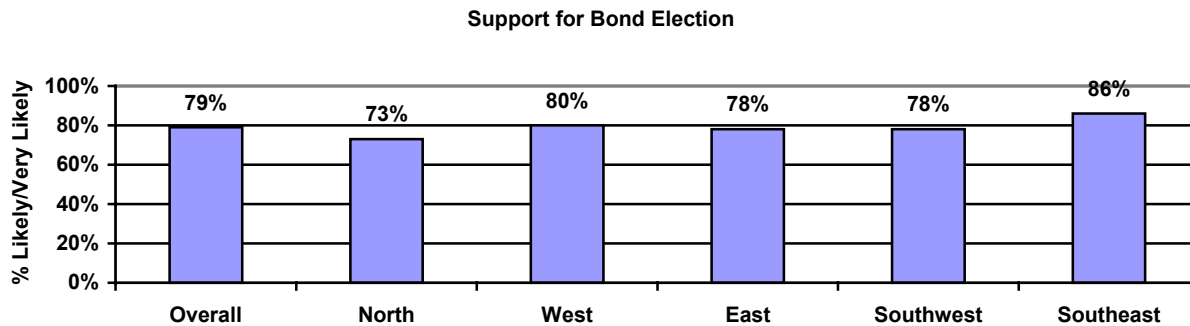
On a scale of 1 to 10, a majority of citizens rate parks and recreation above a 7 (68 percent). Most citizens also feel that the services provided by the department are a good or great value (65 percent). A majority of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the recreational services provided for people in all age groups; however, the lowest ratings were given for teenagers, between the ages of 13 and 17 (75 percent satisfied/very satisfied). Residents in the North Sector were the more satisfied with recreational services than the people in any other area, while the Southeast had the lowest satisfaction ratings.

The following is a list of items that received the highest percentage of excellent/good ratings. These percentages do not include respondents who had no opinion.

- Overall quality of municipal golf courses – 85 percent
- Maintenance of the community center – 85 percent
- Overall quality of parks – 84 percent
- Maintenance of municipal golf courses – 84 percent
- Maintenance of the community center – 85 percent
- Overall safety of recreation centers – 83 percent
- Maintenance of recreation centers – 83 percent
- Overall safety of parks – 83 percent
- Maintenance of parks – 82 percent
- Overall safety of parks – 82 percent
- Maintenance of parks – 82 percent
- Maintenance of senior recreation centers – 82 percent
- Number of parks – 80 percent
- Overall quality of athletic fields – 80 percent
- Maintenance of athletic fields – 80 percent

FUNDING OF PROJECTS

Respondents were asked how likely they would be to support a bond election to finance the construction of any parks and recreation facilities. The following graph shows the percentage of citizens overall and in each sector who said they would be likely or very likely to support a bond election.



Citizens ranked the importance of different strategies that the City could take in deciding where to spend financial resources. The most support was for:

- Renovating and improving existing parks and recreation facilities (51 percent)
- Building new parks and recreation facilities (25 percent)
- Acquiring land for future parks and open space (21 percent).

Citizens also ranked the “most needed” types of parks that they would like the city to develop more of:

- Linear parks (68%)
- Neighborhood parks (62%)
- Community/City parks (49%)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment was divided into four categories – types of parks, outdoor facilities, indoor facilities, and new construction. The information below is based on the percentage of citizens in each sector who said that their area of the city possibly or definitely needs each item. Some items are marked as the “highest need of any area”. That note was only attached if the need rating for respondents in that area was at least 5 percent higher than any other area.

North Sector

- Small, neighborhood parks are the top priority (59 percent), with linear parks (53 percent) being second. Only 21 percent said they needed more large parks.
- Outdoor facilities most needed in the north are:
 - Children’s playground areas – 74 percent
 - Outdoor swimming pools – 72 percent
 - Picnic pavilions/shelters – 67 percent
 - Sand volleyball courts – 65 percent
 - Ponds for fishing and wildlife – 63 percent
 - Outdoor basketball courts – 63 percent
 - Tennis courts – 62 percent (highest need of any area)
 - Picnic tables and grills – 61 percent
 - Soft surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 60 percent
- Indoor facilities most needed are:
 - Indoor swimming pools – 72 percent

- Fitness centers with aerobic equipment – 66 percent
- Fitness centers with weight training equipment – 66 percent
- Gymnastics rooms – 63 percent
- Dance rooms – 61 percent
- Craft rooms – 60 percent
- Senior recreation centers (65 percent) are needed more than indoor recreation centers (58 percent)
- Of the different types of specialty parks, a majority of residents in the North Sector were likely or very likely to use environmental education/natural areas (76 percent). All other specialty parks had less than a 40 percent likelihood of being used.

West Sector

- There was a higher need for linear parks (69 percent), than small, neighborhood parks (59 percent), or large parks (44 percent).
- Outdoor facilities with the highest percentage of possibly or definitely needs were:
 - Children’s playground areas – 75 percent
 - Picnic pavilions or shelters – 74 percent
 - Picnic tables and grills – 69 percent
 - Nature trails – 67 percent
 - Hard surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 67 percent
 - Sand volleyball courts 65 percent
 - Outdoor swimming pools – 64 percent
 - Large, open grassy areas – 64 percent
 - Soccer fields – 64 percent
 - Soft surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 63 percent
 - Youth baseball fields – 62 percent
 - Outdoor basketball courts – 60 percent
 - Softball fields – 60 percent
- Indoor facilities most needed were:
 - Gymnastics rooms – 75 percent
 - Fitness centers with aerobic equipment – 74 percent
 - Fitness centers with weight training equipment – 70 percent
 - Dance rooms – 69 percent
 - Craft rooms – 69 percent
 - Indoor swimming pools – 68 percent
 - Indoor in-line hockey areas 60 percent
- Indoor recreation centers (70 percent) were a higher priority than senior recreation centers (64 percent).
- A majority of West Sector residents said they would be likely or very likely to use environmental education/natural areas (76 percent). Less than half of the residents in this area responding positively to using the other types of specialty parks.

East Sector

- Linear parks are needed most in the East Sector (69 percent), but small, neighborhood parks were a close second (65 percent). Large parks were the third highest priority with 49 percent of residents saying they possibly or definitely needed more.
- The most needed outdoor facilities were:
 - Picnic pavilions or shelters – 82 percent
 - Picnic tables and grills – 80 percent
 - Children’s playground areas – 79 percent
 - Nature trails – 79 percent
 - Ponds for fishing and wildlife – 76 percent (highest need of any area)
 - Hard surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 74 percent
 - Soft surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 68 percent
 - Outdoor basketball courts – 67 percent

- Sand volleyball courts – 66 percent
 - Soccer fields – 66 percent
 - Outdoor swimming pools – 65 percent
- The most needed indoor facilities were:
 - Indoor swimming pools – 65 percent
 - Fitness centers with aerobic equipment – 65 percent
 - Fitness centers with weight training equipment – 64 percent
 - Gymnastics rooms – 64 percent
 - Dance rooms – 61 percent
 - Craft rooms – 61 percent
- Residents of the East Sector were most likely to use environmental education/natural areas (74 percent) than the other types of specialty parks. They also showed more interest than residents in others areas toward dog parks (48 percent), mountain biking areas (47 percent), skateboard parks (37 percent), and BMX parks (32 percent).

Southwest Sector

- Respondents from the Southwest Sector placed the highest priority on linear parks (72 percent) and large parks (70 percent). This was the only sector where large parks were not the lowest priority. A majority of residents still felt there was a need for small, neighborhood parks (56 percent).
- For outdoor facilities, their priorities were:
 - Hard surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 75 percent
 - Picnic pavilions or shelters – 73 percent
 - Nature trails – 73 percent
 - Outdoor swimming pools – 73 percent
 - Soft surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 72 percent
 - Children’s playground areas – 71 percent
 - Picnic tables and grills – 69 percent
 - Large, open grassy areas – 67 percent
 - Ponds for fishing and wildlife – 66 percent
 - In-line hockey/skating areas – 63 percent
- Indoor facilities that received the highest need ratings were:
 - Fitness centers with aerobic equipment – 80 percent
 - Indoor swimming pools – 77 percent
 - Fitness centers with weight training equipment – 77 percent
 - Gymnastics rooms - 74 percent
 - Dance rooms – 73 percent
 - Craft rooms – 71 percent
- A majority of Southwest Sector residents were interested in environmental education/natural areas (76 percent), and nearly half would probably use a dog park (46 percent).

Southeast Sector

- Small, neighborhood parks (71 percent) are the top priority in the Southeast sector and this area had the highest need for this type of park than any other area. Their second priority was linear parks (66 percent) and third was large parks (62 percent).
- The outdoor facilities with the highest need were:
 - Outdoor swimming pools – 86 percent (highest need of any area)
 - Picnic tables and grills – 82 percent
 - Picnic pavilions or shelters – 80 percent
 - Children’s playground areas – 79 percent
 - Nature trails – 78 percent
 - Soft surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 78 percent
 - Large, open grassy areas – 74 percent (highest need of any area)
 - Ponds for fishing and wildlife – 71 percent

- Sand volleyball courts – 68 percent
 - Hard surface trails for multi-purpose activities – 66 percent
 - Outdoor basketball courts – 61 percent
- The top priorities for indoor facilities were:
 - Fitness centers with aerobic equipment – 79 percent
 - Fitness centers with weight training equipment – 79 percent
 - Indoor swimming pools – 75 percent
 - Gymnastics rooms – 75 percent
 - Dance rooms – 73 percent
 - Indoor basketball courts – 73 percent (highest need of any area)
 - Craft rooms – 71 percent
- The need for indoor recreation centers was the highest in the Southeast Sector where 89 percent of residents said they were possibly or definitely needed. Senior recreation centers were also needed more by residents in the southeast (74 percent) than any other area.